PENNSYLVANIA, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS LATEST OF 55 JURISDICTIONS TO SUBSTANTIALLY IMPLEMENT PROVISIONS OF THE ADAM WALSH ACT

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department’s Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART) recently announced that Pennsylvania and the U.S. Virgin Islands are the latest jurisdictions to implement the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA), Title I of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006.

Since the passage of SORNA, which establishes a comprehensive national system for the registration of sex offenders, a total of 16 states, three territories and 36 tribes have met the requirements for implementation. The Act is named in memory of Adam Walsh, a 6-year-old boy, who was abducted from a mall in Hollywood, Fla. on July 27, 1981.

In addition to Pennsylvania and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the states of Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Wyoming, and the United States territories of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, have also substantially implemented SORNA.

“We are encouraged by the efforts of so many jurisdictions to implement SORNA’s requirements, and we commend those that have substantially implemented the Act,” said Linda Baldwin, Director of the SMART Office. “We are also encouraged that the vast majority of jurisdictions are committed to exchanging information in a manner that will lead to improved monitoring and tracking of sex offenders across the United States and abroad.”

States and territories had until July 27, 2011, to substantially implement SORNA. Beginning in 2012, those that did not were subject to a 10-percent reduction in their Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Byrne (JAG) award. The penalty will continue to be applied on an annual basis until a state or territory substantially implements SORNA.

“Fortunately, withheld JAG funding can be reallocated back to states and territories if these funds are applied toward SORNA implementation activities,” added Director Baldwin. “In 2012, all but five jurisdictions (Arizona, Arkansas, California, Nebraska, and Texas) requested reallocation of their SORNA penalty to continue SORNA implementation efforts and we are pleased to announce that we have granted all of the reallocation requests received.”

Thirty-six federally recognized tribes have also substantially implemented SORNA’s requirements. The inclusion of tribal lands into the existing national system of sex offender registries was designed to eliminate safe havens where convicted sex offenders could avoid monitoring and registration. The tribes are: Bay Mills Indian Community, Bois Forte Band of

Many more tribal systems are under review. Tribes that did not implement SORNA by the deadline and can show that they will be able to do so "within a reasonable amount of time," as determined by the Attorney General, were able to submit a request to the SMART Office for additional time to implement the Act.

SORNA requires jurisdictions to share information about sex offenders who are relocating between jurisdictions or are required to register in more than one jurisdiction. The Justice Department has developed an internet-based community easily accessible to registration officials that facilitates exchange of information about registered sex offenders between jurisdictions.

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The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), headed by Acting Assistant Attorney General Mary Lou Leary, provides federal leadership in developing the nation’s capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice, and assist victims. OJP has six components: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. More information about OJP can be found at [http://www.ojp.gov](http://www.ojp.gov).